



COMMITTEE ON  
**EDUCATION  
& LABOR**  
REPUBLICANS

**COMMITTEE  
STATEMENT**

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**Opening Statement of Rep. Fred Keller (R-PA), Republican Leader  
Subcommittee on Workforce Protections Joint Hearing:  
"Protecting Lives and Livelihoods: Vaccine Requirements and Employee  
Accommodations"  
October 26, 2021**

(As prepared for delivery)

"Madam Chair, the Biden administration has created uncertainty and confusion through its politicized COVID-19 policy.

"President Biden has resorted to weaponizing the federal bureaucracy, turning employers into the vaccine and testing police on behalf of the federal government.

"This unprecedented national mandate will put undue burdens on business owners who are already struggling with a worker shortage and a supply chain crisis.

"Our job creators should not be expected to assume the responsibility for the private medical decisions of their employees.

"From manufacturing and energy to retail and hospitality, our team has heard from countless job creators in Pennsylvania's 12th Congressional District that say this mandate will crush their operations. We have heard from rural hospitals and correctional officers, who operate in industries where qualified workers were sorely needed even before federal vaccine mandates were proposed by President Biden. We have now held them back even further by damaging their ability to retain workers.

"After over a year of struggling to get by, businesses need a leg up, not more costly regulations and mandates.

"Further, this federal government mandate is almost certainly unlawful.

"On September 9th, President Biden ordered OSHA to enact a broad and sweeping public health measure under the guise of 'workplace safety.'

"Since OSHA was established 50 years ago, only 10 emergency temporary standards have been issued, and nearly all that were challenged have been rejected by federal courts.

"The Biden administration's vaccine mandate is another power grab by Democrats to make America an authoritarian socialist state where they and Washington know best.

"OSHA's vaccine mandate exceeds the authority delegated to it by Congress and turns private employers into the federal government's enforcement arm.

"And the extreme and punitive fines the Biden administration threatens to level on any business that refuses to comply shows that it will bulldoze any resistance.

"We must stand up to this massive and almost certainly illegal government overreach."

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